

# Colossians 1:1-14

## *A Deep Abiding Understanding of Christ*

Image Church // Life Beyond Sunday: Week 1

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### Introduction

**Starting Point**... Right after the service

New Series... Colossians... Grab your bibles and turn to **Colossians**

1... QR Code labeled... **Colossians Guide**

My wife is from a little town called **Farmer**, it's right outside of **Asheboro**, which is right outside of **Greensboro** in **NC**... You know it is a small town when you have to give at least 3 reference points...

Well everybody knows her family there because her grandfather owned a *Gas Station* that everybody went to... He was a good man with a great reputation for taking care of people...

So, naturally her grandfather and everyone else in her entire family (*entire family as defined there reaches out to at least 2<sup>nd</sup> cousins*) ... all drove trucks... That's just what you do...

Well, it was basically a requirement that Ashley couldn't marry any guy that didn't drive a truck... **Well, it turns out that I am just her man**... let me show you what I mean...

- Here is the first vehicle that I got when I was 17... **(picture 1)**
  - **Unfortunately, it was stolen** my sr. year of college by some guys that used it to steal a forklift to then use to

steal an ATM... I am not lying... I have a picture to prove it... **(picture 2)**

- Here is my second vehicle... **(picture 3)**
  - *Well I sold it so that I could buy Ashley a ring*
- And I bought this guy... **(picture 4)**
- And then several years ago I finally bought this 2007 that I still have today... **(picture 5)**

As you can tell I love **Chevy trucks**... They are the **ONLY real** kind of truck there is!

Here's the problem though, what happens is you get these people that think they know what it means to make a truck look good and they start crafting and creating and you end up with something like this...

- **Ugly truck Pic** ... 1st off its a Ford...
- *Good thing that's become a bad thing*...

**Well, this is a good picture of what's going on in the book of Colossians**...

*You have a church here that's doing pretty good, they're firing on all cylinders (no pun intended)...*

- Sound theology, they are bearing fruit, living in community

But this church is getting a lot of pressure by the surrounding community, specifically 2 groups of people...

- Mystical polytheists thought Jesus was just **another god**
- Jews were holding up practices of the law as mandates for salvation...

Both of these groups were pressuring the church to turn away from Jesus... Threatening a good thing to turn into a bad thing...

Well this guy named **Epaphras** who was a local that had planted this church, had gone to visit Paul in prison and reported this to Him...

So Paul writes this letter to the church and gives it to **Tychicus** to take back to them in Colossae.

And in this letter, Paul encourages this new church to stand firm on the truths of Jesus, **and along with that, he highlights how the truths of Jesus practically play out in everyday life**... And what He shows them is that every part of their human existence is impacted by Jesus...

And we're going to see this morning that Paul starts with an emphasis on **a deep abiding understanding of Christ**...

Now, there would have been **3 types of people that would have eventually head this letter**:

1. The person that is walking with the Lord
2. The person that has rounded 3<sup>rd</sup> and lost sight of home...
  - *Flesh out*
3. The person that is not a follower of Jesus

I say that because I believe that **all 3** of those people are listening in this morning...

And it's my hope that regardless of where you are, or how you walked in, that you will walk out today with a better understanding of who God is and what that means for you!... *Lets jump in*...

## Colossians 1:1-14

**1** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will, and Timothy our brother: **2** To the saints in Christ at Colossae, who are faithful brothers and sisters. Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

So, Paul introduces himself, now he's going to address the church...

**Verse 3** We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, **4** for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints **5** because of the hope reserved for you in heaven.

Notice that their hope is the motivator for their action...

You have already heard about this hope in the word of truth, the gospel **6** that has come to you. It is bearing fruit and growing all over the world, just as it has among you since the day you heard it and came to truly appreciate God's grace.

The gospel has been heard and received and it's bearing fruit within the church in Colossae...

They have come to truly appreciate God's grace...

- *Talk about this*...

And yet Paul is about to preach the gospel to them in this letter... The gospel is not the start of the Christian life it is the essence of the Christian life...

- This morning we're going to see why that is...

Then Paul says this in **verse 7**:

**7** You learned this from Epaphras, our dearly loved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, **8** and he has told us about your love in the Spirit.

Now Check this out... From what we know Paul has **never** preached in Colossae, in fact, he's in prison as he is writing this letter!<sup>1</sup>

Paul had faithfully preached the gospel to **Epaphras**, Epaphras believes, and then he takes the message of the gospel to Colossae where revival is happening and it's spreading like wildfire all throughout the city!

What's amazing is the **domino effect** that comes through faithful obedience to make disciples!!

- There's no telling how God can use our **faithful obedience** to further His message and His ministry...

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<sup>1</sup> Historical info from Ed Gravely: Colossians; Lesson 1

We should look at what happened here with **Paul** and **Epaphras** and **Colossae** and be *challenged* to live this out, but also be *encouraged* that **if** we live this out that God can do the same thing here!!

*Then Paul says in verse 9: For this reason also, since the day we heard this, we haven't stopped praying for you. We are asking...*

Alright, so Paul's about to write out his prayer for the church of Colossae- and here's the awesome part about prayers recorded in the Bible- they are filled with really awesome nuggets- things that we need to be asking for... Things that we need to be aligning our life around!

*So, Paul says in light of your reception of the gospel... We are praying that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,*

Now, I know we hear **His will**, and we think about the path that we need to walk... That's not what Paul's talking about...

- A little help: In **Ephesians 1:9** Paul says that God's will has been revealed in Christ...

Paul's desire here is that they would have **a deep and abiding understanding of Christ** and all that He means for their lives and the world...<sup>2</sup>

- He wants them to have the ability to *discern the truth and make good decisions esp. In light of the pressure they're experiencing...*<sup>3</sup>

Here's the thing this deep understanding of Christ and the wisdom and spiritual understanding that comes from it is given to you through the power of the **Holy Spirit**... What Paul gets at here with **spiritual...**

- When you trust in the finished work of Jesus you receive the Spirit...
- The Spirit is access to the power and presence of God...
- The way that you access this power is through faith...

<sup>2</sup> Douglas J. Moo, *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2008), 93–95.

<sup>3</sup> ie: that they have *wisdom and spiritual understanding...*

Watch this: When Paul says “**We are asking that you may be filled...**”

The original language shows us that this is written in the **Devine passive**, meaning that God's the one who does the work, **He's the one who can give you a deep abiding understanding of Christ!**

- This **filling** is something God does we lean into Him through faith...
- And the way we receive this **filling** is through the **Holy Spirit**...

**Appeal:** For some of you, you're here and you feel complacent, no motivation, the Christian life is mundane for you... The message of Jesus has lost its wow factor...

- How often do you come to God and ask Him to fill you?
- Prayer is one of the ways we lean in, in faith...
- And when we lean in, in prayer, putting out faith in action that God fills us through the power of the Holy Spirit...

**Example:** When you first have a kid... Incredible!! After about 2 months... Cry scream, up at night, blowouts... You're tired... Looses it's awe factor... But you have to go back to why you had a kid and who that kid is...

- Then they get older and leave their stuff out and you step on it at night and the process starts all over again...

**The same is true in the Christian life!**

- *Explain... The Spirit is the one who realings us, who reignites a passion in us...*

**Another example:** *I like to workout... I sometimes take pre-workout... It stimulates me, it gives me the push I need esp. When I am tired...*

The **Holy Spirit** is like the pre-workout of the Chrtistian life... It stimulates us and empowers us... But for us to experience that we have to lean in, in faith- we have to ask God to fill us, like Paul is asking this for the church in Colossae...

***When is the last time you've asked God to fill you with a deep and abiding understanding of Christ?!?***

So, the way that Paul starts his prayer is not by praying that the Colossians would do anything but that they would be **filled** with something...

- Filled with **a deep and abiding understanding of Christ**... That happens through the power of the **Holy Spirit** when we lean in, in faith...

But Paul doesn't just desire this for them for the sake of learning more, but for the sake of living differently... **Look at verse 10: 10 so that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God,**

We have to see the **order** of this...

- The filling happens before the walking...

Listen, when we see people try to “walk” before they’re filled, the result is “religion”...

Some of you lack motivation... You are sitting there thinking that one day it will all click and it will be sunshine and rainbows toward glory

- That is just not it
  - Where I am in my personal life is reorienting myself around my faith each day... **Flesh out**
  - You grow through deep abiding faith that returns you to Jesus time and time again through seasons of victory and trial

**So let's talk about how this all fits together practically...**

Asking God to fill me with a deep abiding understanding of Christ...

- This is the pervasive nature of the gospel...

And then we walk in the light of that filling- in light of that awareness, in light of that reminder of Christ...

***I really want you to understand how a deep abiding understanding of Christ gives way to walking in a manner worthy of the Lord, that is pleasing and bearing fruit...***

**Motivation** for walking worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing and bearing fruit...

- Jesus...
  - **Examples:**
    - love...
    - Generosity...
    - Service...
    - Community...

**Missing fruit**- the problem is at the root!

- **Examples...**
  - Not loving my wife well...
  - Short with a coworker...
  - Looking at something that you shouldn't...
  - Anxiety...

***A deep abiding understanding of Christ*** has to be the root for us to see the fruit...

This is why the gospel is not just the start of the Christian life, it is the essence of the Christian life... This is why Paul starts off by Praying for a church that doing well to be filled with a deeper understanding of the gospel!

Now, do we always get this right?? Of course not... And it's in those times of failure, in the times when we fall short, when we're looking to be filled by the things of the world, or being compelled to run after the things of the world that we have to repent and remember the gospel...

That is the Christian life over and over again... And it is beautiful, messy, and profound!

And what this not only is there a change in action that comes from a deep understanding of Christ... **Check this out in verse 11:**

**11** being **strengthened** with all **power**, according to his glorious might, **so that** you may have great endurance and patience, joyfully **12** giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the saints' inheritance in the light.

Paul asks God here for the church in Colossae to be **strengthened with all power**... Where does that strength and power come from? THE HOLY SPIRIT...

This is not something you muster up, but something God gives you... It comes through the power of the **Holy Spirit**...

- The Spirit doesn't just float around!

Here's what that strength and power gives you the ability to do... have **great endurance and patience**, joyfully **12** giving thanks to the **Father**,

The Christian life is not easy... it's hard... the only motivation we have is Jesus... And when you have **a deep abiding understanding of Christ** it allows you to have **endurance, patience and joy!**

**Appeal:** Some of you are lacking these 3 things in your life...

- **Endurance, patience and joy**
- How do you access them?
- Through a deep abiding understanding of Christ...
  - What awaits you because of Christ... **endurance in life**
  - How patient God was with you... **patience in your life**
  - Jesus saved me from my sin. I can trust him with my circumstances... I can have hope that I am not alone..... **joy in your life**

Then here comes the reminder as Paul brings this all full circle... **Verse 13:** He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. **14** In him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

**Walk through:**

- He has rescued us from the domain of darkness
- He has transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.
- In him, we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

## Conclusion [VAMP]

**Summary:** What we see in Paul's prayer is a petition for a deep abiding understanding of Christ...

Apply...

- For some of you, you have a deep and abiding love for something other than Jesus...
- Repent...
- Some of you are missing Jesus... been all about religion...
- Trust in Jesus for the first time...
- Some of you have been complacent... Showing in your lack of fruit...

### **Appeal for Baptism**

You know one of the most beautiful pictures of God's rescue from darkness to light... God's redemption... **Baptism**

Jesus gave us baptism as a **picture** of our salvation...

The question is, will you be faithful to make this deceleration... Are you willing to make known who you are in Christ so that others can experience Christ?

When you are baptized you put the gospel on display!

The first identification you make with Christ's happens through baptism. That's where you say, *"I'm not ashamed to identify with Jesus and what He has done for me and in me."*

BAPTISM Paul will says in **Romans 6:3–4** is:

- "Baptized into His death, and Buried with baptism." What does that mean?
  - It means that you're grabbing the cross and saying, "I am not ashamed."

**Are you ready to do that?**

Come to starting talk to one of our pastors or prayer team, or come to starting point right after the service

***Pray...***